

Cold Water Safety

Cold water is very dangerous, even when it is not covered in ice. Unexpected falls into cold water represent 15% of all cold-water immersion deaths. Activities like walking or playing near open cold water lead to the most immersion deaths, followed by fishing and hunting.

- If you are suddenly immersed in cold water, your body will go in to **cold water shock**:
 - This causes you to breathe at 10 to 20 times your normal rate, lasting two to three minutes.
 - If your mouth is close to the water, you will likely inhale very cold water, cooling your body much faster and increasing the chances of drowning.
 - Within five to 10 minutes, you will be too cold and numb to be able to get yourself out of the water.
- Your body will lose heat about 25 times faster in water than air of the same temperature.
 - Swimming around will make this happen even faster.
- Keeping your clothes on will help keep you warmer, and trapped air pockets will help you float.